

## It's OK to beef up Nkandla security

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IN DECEMBER 2009 I took a break from the treadmill for a quick trip to my alma mater, Gcotshehi Bantu Combined School. I passed Standard 4 at this school in 1968. We collected dung from nearby homesteads to polish the floor until a community tax raised enough to construct a cement floor. The principal lived in a thatched mud hut on the grounds.

As I drove to the place I could not help noticing how parts of it had become overcrowded. I had last seen the place on a short trip in 1976.

Last year I had the opportunity to travel extensively through KwaZulu-Natal. Poverty jumps at you everywhere you go.

There is no budget for beefing up the security of the head of state in a place that is singularly unpresidential like Nkandla. Still it has to be done and can be done without breaking the bank.

As yet we do not know the extent to which the R240m bill for the president's homestead was inflated. However we all agree that the price tag is exorbitant. The stage is set for an attack on the ANC.

Led by the Minister of Public Works, Thulas Nxesi, the government has probed the matter and noted that the project of beefing up security at the private residence of President Zuma was necessary and urgent. The government has requested the relevant agencies to carry out an independent investigation. These are acts of a state that is determined to build a winning nation.

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